

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheet makes changes to Fig. 3 and replaces the original sheet with Figs. 3 and 4.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet (1)

REMARKS

Claims 16-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 23 is amended to correct a minor informality. Fig. 3 is amended to show the features of claim 24, and the specification is amended to be consistent with Fig. 3. No new matter is added.

I. Objection to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). The objection is respectfully traversed.

The first feature provided on the scanning device is shown as reference number 26A in Fig. 1 (page 4, lines 19-23). The first feature provided on the object is shown as reference number 32 in Fig. 3 (page 5, line 33 to page 6, line 2). The second feature provided on the object is shown as reference number 28 in Fig. 1 (page 10, lines 5-10). A fixture for at least partially housing an object is shown as reference number 29 in Fig. 1 (page 4, lines 10-12).

The second feature provided on the scanning device is shown as reference number 38 in amended Fig. 3, and described in the amended specification on page 6, lines 23-25.

Amended Fig. 3 shows a sample holder 38 to which the proximal end of the turbine blade (or sample) 30 is attached. The second feature comprises a side surface 38A of the sample holder 38, as described in the amended specification. Providing a sample holder for retaining the turbine blade is discussed on page 6, lines 23 and 24. The concept of using the side surface of such a sample holder as a recognizable feature is described in the context of the turbine blade example shown in Fig. 3 and discussed on page 7, lines 3-7 (disclosing how a sample holder of known diameter can provide the second feature). The use of the side surface of a sample holder to provide a recognizable feature is also disclosed in the specification on page 4, lines 19-22, in reference to Fig. 1. Thus, the amendments to Fig. 3 and the specification do not introduce new matter.

It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

II. The Claims are Patentable

The Office indicates that claims 24, 36 and 27 contain allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates this indication of allowability and submits that claim 16, the claim from which 24, 36 and 27 depend, is allowable for the reasons discussed below.

The Office Action rejects claims 16-20 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Andersson et al. (Andersson), U.S. Patent No. 5,733,126. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Andersson fails to disclose or suggest recognising the first feature whereby when the first feature is recognised the scanning device is ready to start or end the scan, as recited in claim 16. Andersson discloses a method for contour scanning that involves manually setting the start and end points of the scan by a technician. Specifically, Andersson discloses an initial manual adjustment process in which the height of the holder or turning part 5 is vertically adjusted such that the front part of the scanning member rests against the model by using manual maneuvering members 11 and 12, or 17, 18 and 19, 20 (Figs. 4, 13; col. 6, lines 9-13). Only after manual adjustment is the scan started. The scan involves rotating and vertically displacing a turntable holder 5a until the measuring probe reaches a certain predetermined point above a preparation model 2, where it stops (col. 6, lines 21-34). Thus, Andersson discloses a scanning process in which both the start and end points of the scan are manually set by a technician; the start point being set by manual adjustment of the probe and the end point being set as a predetermined probe/turntable separation. Therefore, Andersson is unable to automatically determine the start point and end point of a scan. Thus, Andersson fails to disclose or suggest recognising the first feature whereby when the first feature is recognised the scanning device is ready to start or end the scan, as recited in claim 16.

Claims 17-20 depend from claim 16. Claim 30, in part, recites features similar to those recited in claim 16. Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above, Andersson fails to disclose or suggest the combinations of features recited in claims 17-20 and 30. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 23, 25 and 28-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Seddon et al. (Seddon), U.S. Patent No. 6,327,788. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 23, 25, 28 and 29 depend from claim 16. The Office Action does not assert that Seddon discloses or suggests the features of claim 16. Thus, the rejection of claims 23, 25, 28 and 29 is improper. As discussed below, however, Seddon fails to disclose or suggest the combination of features recited in claim 16. Further, claim 25 depends from claim 24, which the Office Action indicates contains allowable subject matter. Thus, the rejection of claim 25 is improper for this additional reason.

With respect to claim 30, Seddon fails to disclose or suggest a control device for recognising a first feature whereby the control device starts and/or ends a scan on the basis of recognising the first feature, as recited in claim 30. Seddon discloses a method for scanning the surface of a workpiece. The Seddon method for setting the start position is a manual process that includes manually setting the height of the probe stylus 9 relative to the workpiece 10 to be scanned by adjusting the position of the carriage 6 (col. 4, lines 33-42). After the height is set by the operator, the probe is moved transversely toward the workpiece 10 under automated control until the stylus 9 contacts the surface 10a of the workpiece 10 (col. 4, lines 35-37). Although contacting the surface of the workpiece appears to start the scanning process, the method of Seddon does not involve recognising any feature, as recited in claim 30. Once the height is set, the scan starts at the first point of the surface that is contacted, regardless of the position or properties of that point. Thus, the start position of the scan is defined only by the initial height that is manually set by the operator, and no

recognition step is performed. Thus, Seddon fails to disclose or suggest a control device for recognising a first feature whereby the control device starts and/or ends a scan on the basis of recognising the first feature, as recited in claim 30.

Further, because claim 16, in part, recites features similar to claim 30, Seddon also fails to disclose or suggest the combination of features recited in claim 16. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Andersson in view of Seddon. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 21 and 22 incorporate the features of claim 16, and thus are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 16. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 16-30 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:DRK/smo

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Replacement Sheet (1)

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